

Old Roma Alley Alternatives Report September 2002

Prepared for:



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Old Roma Alley

Alternatives Report

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1. Analysis of Old Roma Alley

Existing

'Old Roma Alley' is a 20' wide, 410' long, north/south, paved, service road connecting Glendale Avenue to Glenn Drive. It provides an alley to the back of businesses facing 58th Avenue and Glendale Avenue. In the late 1980s an east/west pedestrian breezeway connection from 58th Avenue to the mid-section of Old Roma Alley was developed. At a later date the south end of the alley was closed to traffic and roughly 'pedestrianized' with brick pavers laid over the existing asphalt. The curb cut providing vehicular traffic on Glendale Avenue still remains.

Service and private vehicles seeking access to the stores use the alley. Semi-trucks serve the Mad Hatter Antique Mall. A mobile hoist serves Qwest about twice a month. The alley ingress/egress at Glenn Drive is blocked while the hoist is present.

To the east of the alley are two parking lots: one belonging to the Mad Hatter and the other to Qwest. Although both are private they appear to be available for public use. The parking lots are divided by a curb and narrow sidewalk. Two dumpsters, a grease container and a telecommunications box are located, roughly, at the junction of the narrow sidewalk and Alley. Overhead utility poles line the Alley.

2. Opportunities

This Project offers a unique opportunity to explore in a small area different ways of treating the alleyway in the following ways:

1. Providing Shade
2. Planting
3. Types of Trees
4. Color
5. Paving
6. Treatments for areas shared by pedestrians and vehicles
7. Noise abatement
8. Furniture
9. Lighting
10. Art
11. Activity areas etc.

In analyzing the site, studying the existing conditions and determining the constraints and potential, the following conceptual alternatives were developed.

3. Alternatives – Concept A

Concept 'A' was designed to emphasize the linear aspect of the alley and to draw pedestrians into the alleyways. This concept has special entrance features that extend out over the sidewalks on Glendale Ave., Glenn Dr. and 57th Dr. that can be seen from a distance to draw people to the area. A tree lined walkway, from 57th Dr. to the alley, will improve the appearance and provide shady pedestrian connection through the existing parking lots.

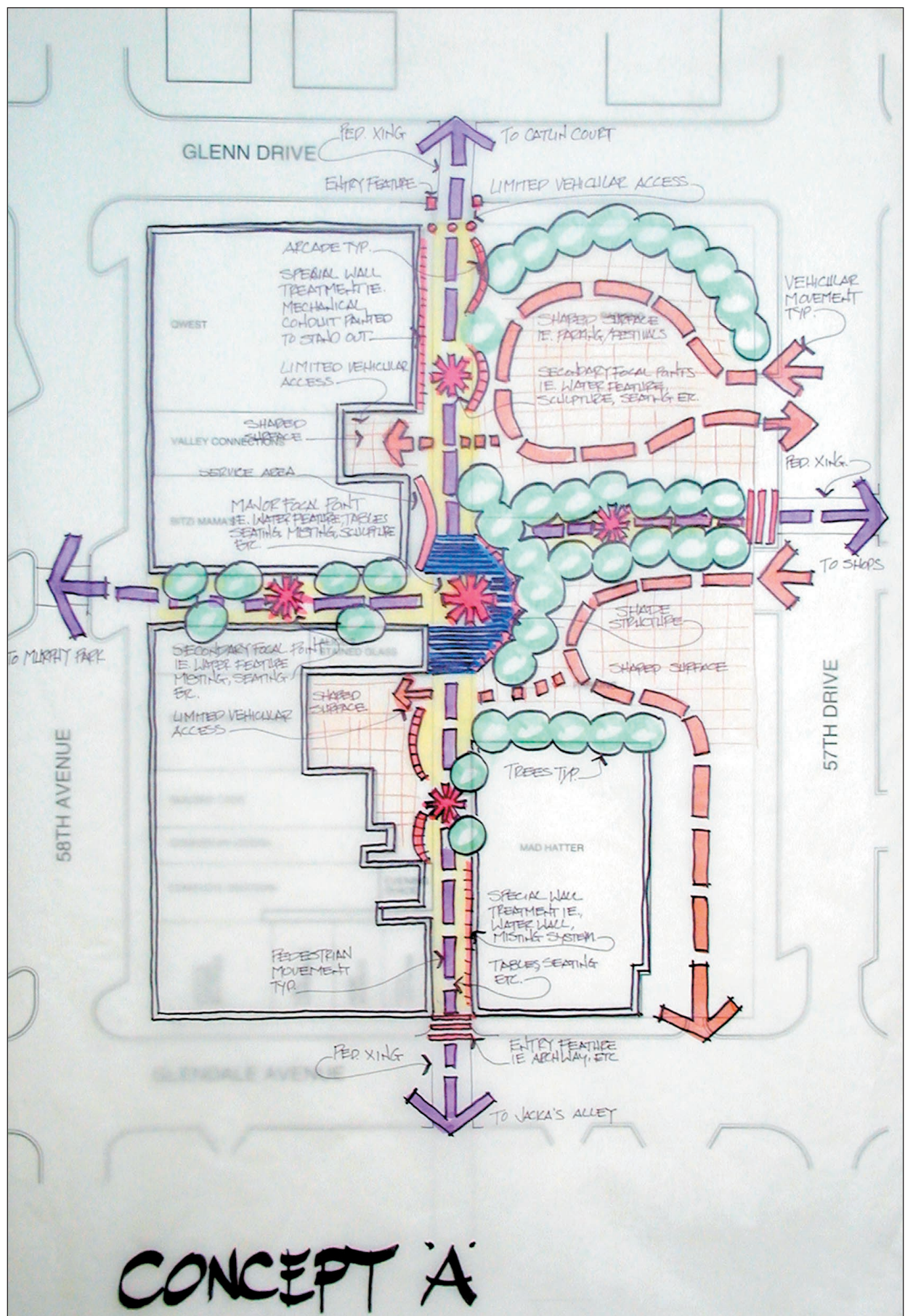
Once inside the alleyway, four secondary features and one primary feature, such as water features or public art would create interesting places to gather. The primary feature /center element is located at the intersection of the breezeway and the alley. One secondary feature is located at the mid-section of the breezeway and one is placed at the mid-section of the walkway to 57th Drive. The remaining two secondary features are located on either side of the primary element midway between it and Glendale Ave. and Glenn Drive. A shade structure is proposed as the central element. A screen wall behind Bitzee Mama's restaurant would conceal the maintenance area from view.

Special paving is suggested for all of the shared surfaces and vehicular traffic would be limited to the large parking areas. Different paving treatments will be used for the pedestrian crossings on the major thoroughfares as well as the central plaza area.

The proposed artwork for the east-facing wall belonging to Qwest could use the existing infrastructure attached on the wall as a part of its theme, i.e. color the entire conduit a special color to enhance it rather than try to hide it.

The disadvantage of this concept is that the minor focal points at the midsections of the walkways may take away from the major focal point at the center of the project. Another concern would be the maintenance required for the focal point areas, especially if they become water features.

The addition of more trees and shrubs will be an advantage because of the shade and cooling effect they will have for the pedestrians. It will require more maintenance for the City to keep them healthy and clean up the litter from leaves and birds.



4. Alternatives – Concept B

Concept 'B' was designed to 'open up' the alleyway, thereby providing more area for vendor's booths during Saturday markets and seasonal festivities. The arched entries proposed in Concept 'B' would provide a sense of "arrival" to the pedestrian. This concept suggests widening some of the spaces to provide more shade and comfort with canopies, landscaping and seating.

Special wall treatments, such as trompe l'oeil, banners and murals would provide a special visual affect on the Qwest rear wall. A tree-lined, curved walk behind the Qwest building approach breaks up the linear element and softens the hard angles created by the buildings.

At the meeting place of the alley and the breezeway a special central feature of water or public art with a shade canopy, decorative screen walls, arched entries and seating would become a pleasant place to relax or dine. Adjacent to the center area is a gated, wall enclosure with trees and vines, for the rear of Bitzee Mama's. This would create an attractive alternate entrance to this restaurant and screen its service activities from view.

A curved walkway from the center area would travel east to break up the parking lots and provide a shaded walkway for pedestrians. A combination of these elements with special paving treatments and limited vehicular access would define the alleyway space.

The disadvantages of this concept are that the curving walkways will take away parking spaces. All parking spaces in downtown Glendale are very important and the elimination of them needs to be kept to a minimum. Also the addition of water features will add to the maintenance of the City.

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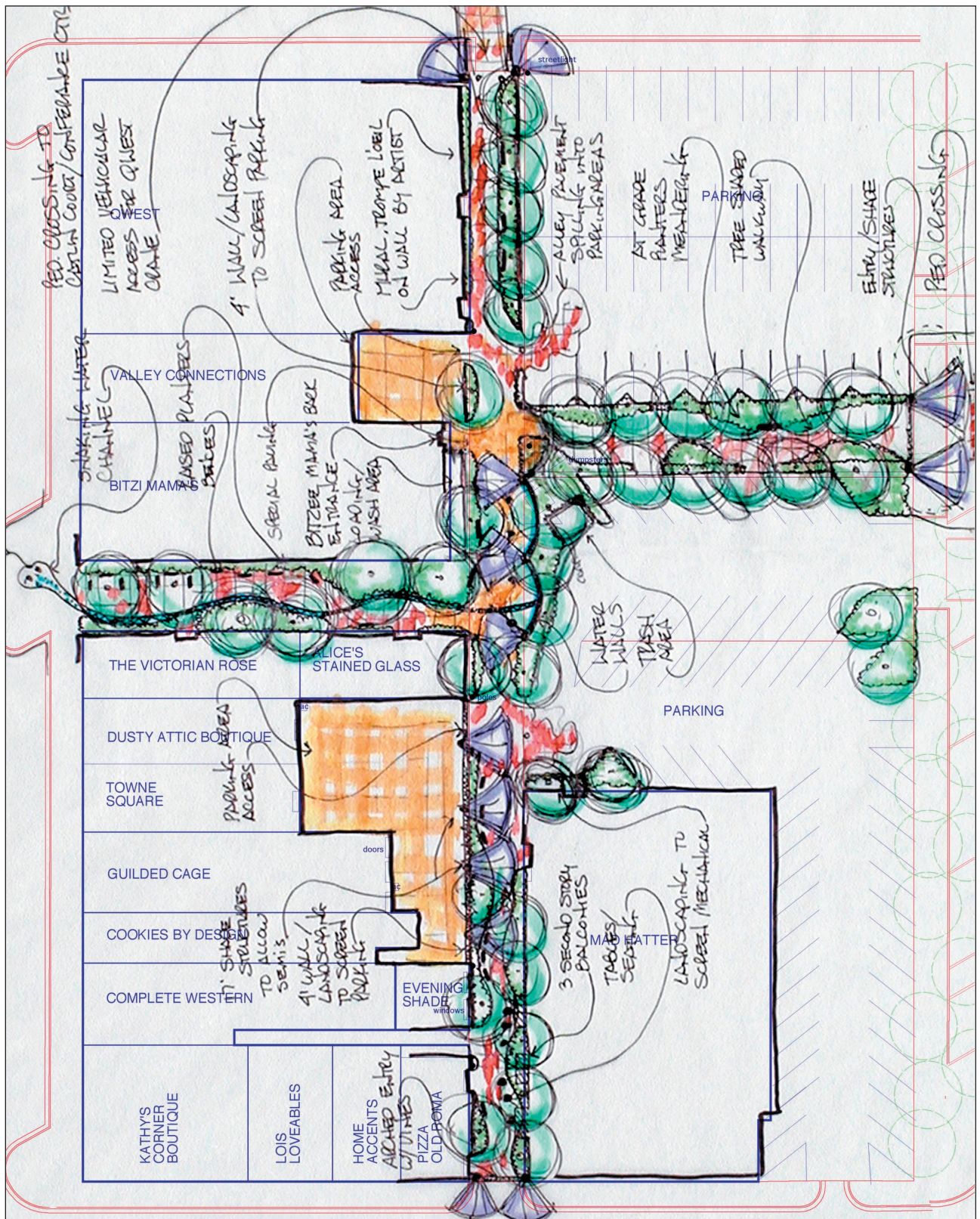
5. Preferred Concept Plan

In May the MAG Program Manager, Stakeholders, Consultant and Local Contact discussed the two concepts, "A" and "B". Both concepts had many good ideas but it was agreed that Concept A was the overall choice while some ideas from Concept 'B' will also be incorporated.

The preferred concept will keep the linear aspect of the alley. Landscaping and low walls will be used to create the edge and also screen any undesirable views in areas where the alley is not defined by buildings. For example, landscaping and a low wall will screen the parking and enclose the alley for the area that is along the parking lot behind the Qwest building. Also the parking/service areas on the west side of the alley will use similar elements to create this edge. This linear design will also maintain a majority of the existing parking spaces, which was a major concern of the Stakeholders.

The central area where the breezeway and alley meet will be a central meeting space with special features such as water and shade coverings. The water element will be a water wall with jets of water coming out of the pavement in front of it. The wall will serve several functions: It will screen the parking lot to the east, create a cool retreat in which to sit and relax, and the sound of water will mitigate any noise in the area. The jets of water will be located so they can be seen from the breezeway and the alleys. They will be flush with the pavement and can be turned off for events. Special paving will be used in this meeting area and a screen wall will be placed around Bitzee Mama's service area.

Special paving in the parking/service areas, behind the businesses on the west side of alley, will be incorporated to compliment the alley but also allow parking/service for the businesses. These areas could also be used for special functions and festivals thereby increasing the functionality of the alley and bringing more pedestrians into the area.



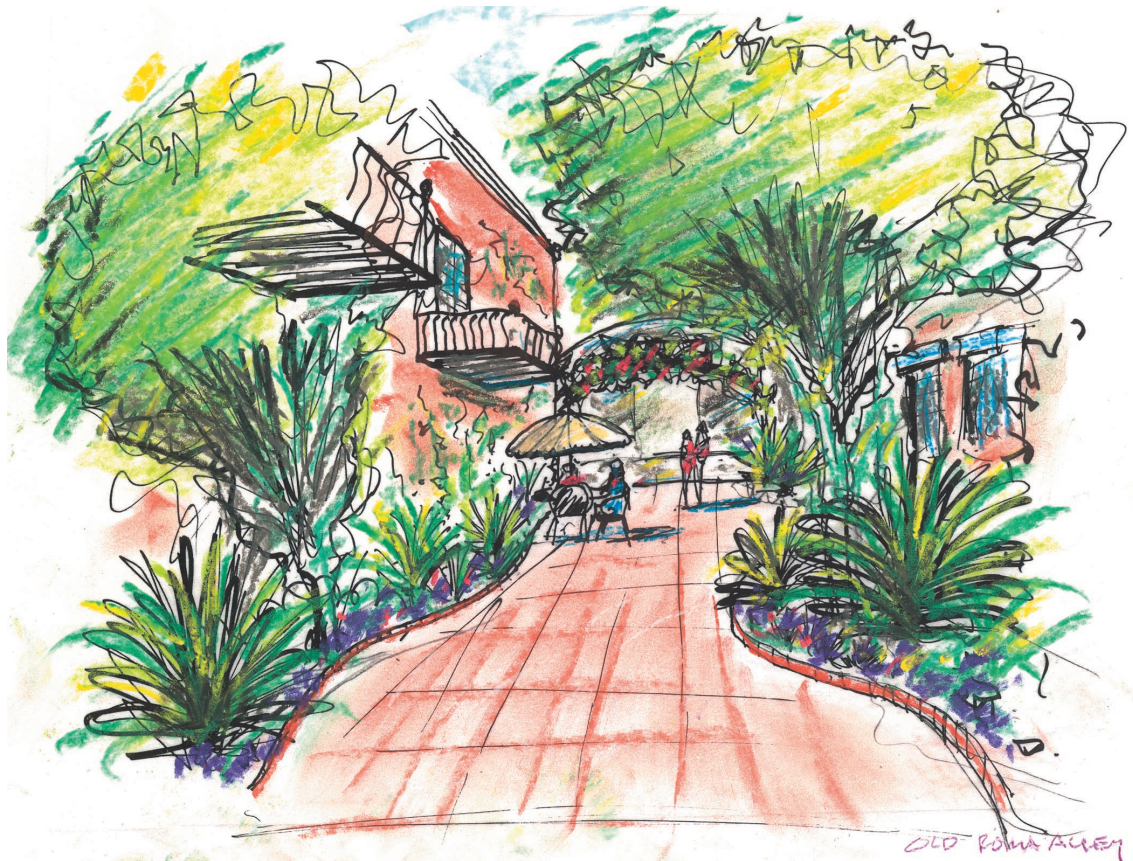
The alley has many blank, uninteresting walls along it and the preferred concept employs various techniques to create an interesting environment. The west wall of Mad Hatter has 4 boarded up windows that are at the second floor level. Balconies will be placed below these openings to create a romantic atmosphere. A tromp l'oeil will be placed behind them which will create realistic window scenes.

An artist will paint the blank facades on the west side of the alley with murals. The brick facades will not be altered. The Qwest building's façade will have a mural painted on the northern side of the wall. The southern side of the wall has conduit attached to it and these will be painted a color to emphasize them.

The entry features to the alleys will extended out into the sidewalk area so pedestrians can see them from a distance, thereby drawing them to the alley. The entry features will incorporate structures or elements that could be used throughout downtown on future alley projects.

A pedestrian walkway will be added from the center plaza area east to 57th Drive. The walkway will be tree lined to create shade and will have a similar paving treatment to the alleys as well entry feature structures will at the entrance.

A variety of lighting types will be used. Down lighting will be used on the shade structures for pedestrian lighting. Down lighting will also be incorporated into the trees to create an interesting shadow effect on the ground plane as well as to accent the trees and light the area. Individual pedestrian lights will be used at various intervals to create a safe and inviting area. The water wall and water jets will also use lighting that will create an interesting nightscape.



The large trash containers will be relocated and screened with landscaping. They will be located behind the water wall. Trash receptacles will be located throughout the alley wherever tables and/or seating are located.

Seating and/or tables are located nearby any restaurant entry i.e., tables will be located by Old Roma Pizza and the rear of Bitzee Mama's (central plaza) to encourage outdoor eating. Seating will occur in the breezeway adjacent to Bitzee Mama's to create an intimate seating area. Seating will also be located by the water wall in the center plaza.

The utility poles and lines are an eyesore and should ideally be placed underground before any construction takes place. According to APS, the expenses would be more than \$100,000 to remove the poles and place the lines underground. Not included in this cost is the expense to the individual business owners to underground their lines from the alley to their existing service, which might not meet current building code. The City does not have funds at this time to underground the utilities.